

REMARKS

Claims 1–19 and 22–29 are pending.

Applicant acknowledges Examiner Nordmeyer's time and courtesy during the personal interview with applicant's representative James E. Ruland on April 7, 2004. See Interview Summary.

No exhibit was shown and no demonstration was conducted, claims 1–19, 22 and 23 were discussed, and U.S. Patent Nos. 6,136,130 (Tataryan) and 5,662,976 (Popat) were discussed. Applicant also presented an Associate Power Of Attorney, which is being submitted with the reply.

Applicant also proposed amendments, which are depicted above in claims 1, 18, 22, 23, and new claims 24–29. The amendments to claims 1, 18, 22 and 23 do not narrow their scope.

A summary of the arguments presented during the interview is provided below.

Arguments

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph

Claims 1–19, 22 and 23 stand rejected as allegedly failing to comply with the written description requirement. Applicant has amended claims 1 and 18 to define the non-perforated section as having a length greater than the distance spanned by at least one tie in a microperforated section. In addition, new claims 24 and 25 define the non-perforated section as having a length greater than the distance spanned by at least three ties in a microperforated section. Support for these amendments can be found in Figs. 2–4. Consequently, applicant respectfully submits that this rejection should be withdrawn.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1–3, 5, 6, 9, 10, and 17–19 stand rejected as allegedly being unpatentable over Tataryan and claims 4, 7, 8, and 11–13 stand rejected as allegedly being unpatentable over Tataryan in view of Popat.

Applicant respectfully submits that neither of these references teaches or suggests a non-perforated section having a length greater than the distanced spanned by at least one tie in a microperforated section (relevant to independent claims 1 and 18) or ties between microperforations having a length less than 0.5 mm and non-perforated sections between microperforated sections and ties (or lines of microperforated sections and ties) of 1–5 mm in length (relevant to claims 22 and 23). Consequently, applicant respectfully submits that these rejections should be withdrawn.

In view of the above, favorable reconsideration is courteously requested. If there are any remaining issues which can be expedited by a telephone conference, the examiner is courteously invited to telephone counsel at the number indicated below.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any fees associated with this response or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 14-0225.

Respectfully submitted,

James E. Rúland, Reg. No. 37,432
Attorney for Applicant

Richard J. Traverso, Reg. No. 30,595
Attorney for Applicant

PLEASE SEND CORRESPONDENCE TO:

**Douglas S. Foote, Esq.
NCR Corporation
Law Department ECD-2
101 West Schantz Avenue
Dayton, Ohio 45479-0001**

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